

## MISCELLANEOUS.

*On the Habits of the Southern Sea-Lion.*

By Mr. A. D. BARTLETT.

[As I was not able to go to see the Sea-Lion, or Eared Seal, from Patagonia, which I hear has been exhibited in various parts of Europe, and as the account that Mr. Bartlett gave me of its habits was very interesting, and different from that in Buffon and most popular works on natural history, I requested he would put his observations in writing for me.—J. E. GRAY.]

*To Dr. J. E. Gray, British Museum.*

DEAR SIR,—In compliance with your request, I beg to forward the following notes respecting the Seal now living in Cremorne Gardens.

In size it is larger than a full-grown mastiff dog; the neck very long and thick; the head is rather narrow, but otherwise much like the head of a lioness; the eyes large, very full and prominent (quite unlike our flat-eyed Seals). The animal stands on all fours; the hind feet, which are very long, are under the belly; the front legs resting on the wrist, with the feet turned outwards on each side; these are also very long. In this way he jumps or bounds along, with the body bent up, at a great rate, reminding one of a weasel or polecat. In this manner it progresses as fast as a man could run, or nearly so; it also walks about, slow or fast, following its master, suiting its pace to his with great ease, the great length of its feet, however, giving it an awkward appearance; in fact, the feet have a very slovenly look. It climbs over chairs or other obstacles with facility, and ascended a raised platform upwards of 5 feet high, at the word of command pulling a trigger with its mouth, and firing a cannon.

The animal roars or growls very much like a lioness, but less loud; it exhibits great attachment to its keeper, but appears fierce to strangers; it raised itself perfectly upright against its keeper, and clasped him round the neck with its front paws, placing its mouth against his lips: in this position it appears about 6 feet high. It certainly has more intelligence than any of the Felidæ. The keeper threw his cap across the room; the animal ran immediately, and, at the command of its master, returned with it in his mouth, taking it to him as readily as a well-trained dog.

The colour of this animal is a rich brown; the ears are narrow, and about an inch in length; the nose is naked, like a large dog's, but the nostrils are capable of being closed; the whiskers long and curved downwards; the tail short: the testes are external, and about the size of those of a lion; they are placed low down, near the tail; the hind feet have nearly straight claws; the fore feet have only the rudiments of the claws visible; the teeth are very dark-coloured, and look like the teeth of a very old animal.

Yours faithfully,

A. D. BARTLETT.